

Washington, DC (February 17, 2012) - Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) released the following statement in response to House passage of an extension of middle class tax cuts, unemployment insurance, and the Medicare physician payment rate:

“At the end of this month, without today’s passage of the Middle Class Tax relief and Job Creation Act, millions of unemployed workers looking for jobs would lose their unemployment benefits, physicians serving 48 million seniors and people with disabilities would face a 27% cut in their Medicare payments, and the temporary one-year payroll tax holiday would end, taking money out of the pockets of 160 million Americans and costing 500,000 jobs. Congressional leaders came to an agreement that would prevent these outcomes, and earlier today, I voted for the bill.

“However, I did so very reluctantly. Congressional Republicans refused Democratic proposals to pay for these extensions by imposing a surtax on millionaires and billionaires. Instead, they are asking middle-class Americans to foot the bill. I am particularly opposed to the requirement that federal workers – who have already contributed \$60 billion to deficit reduction through pay freezes – are being asked to sacrifice even more through changes in their pensions. I oppose cuts in the Prevention and Public Health Fund that is designed to keep Americans healthy and lower health care costs, and I oppose reductions in bad debt payments to hospitals and nursing homes.

This one-year payroll tax extension is temporary and while the nation was spared a last-minute crisis, Congress cannot continue to allow Republicans to ask the middle class alone to foot the bill.”

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